HOW TO USE THE COLORADO MUNICIPAL
RECORDS RETENTION SCHEDULE

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Terminology

Terminology that may be unfamiliar to some users is explained in *Appendix B – Glossary*.

Numbering System

The *Colorado Municipal Records Retention Schedule* is organized in 17 individual schedules that group related records. Each schedule is assigned a reference number, and an item identification number is assigned to each records title listed (i.e. 1.10 means Schedule 1, Item 10). The schedule and item identification numbers are listed with the individual records titles in the index -- **the key to locating records titles in the schedules.**

Record Titles and Description

Because the records titles used may not reflect the exact records titles used by some municipalities, the retention schedule provides a short paragraph that gives descriptive information regarding the use and typical contents of each records series and sub-series.

Retention Periods

Retention periods are based on legal requirements for those records governed by such legal requirements and/or on common usage and industry standards for retention of municipal records to meet typical administrative, operational or reference requirements. The retention time period indicates the minimum length of time that the **record copy** should be retained by the municipality before disposal can take place. A retention period is always specified for the record copy and may also be specified in some cases for duplicate copies for records that are widely distributed throughout an organization. If no retention period is specified for **duplicate copies** of a particular type of record, the municipality may dispose of these duplicates in accordance with the following guidelines:

DUPLICATE COPIES CREATED FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES
Retain for 1 year and then destroy.

DUPLICATE COPIES CREATED FOR CONVENIENCE OR REFERENCE
Retain until no longer needed for reference or 1 year, whichever is first, and then destroy.

Duplicate copies should not be retained longer than the record copy.

CRS 6-17-104 provides a default retention period of three years for records that state law requires to be retained when no retention period is otherwise specified.

The retention period specified in these schedules applies to the information contained within the record, regardless of the physical format of the record (paper, microfilm, computer disk or tape, optical disk, etc.).

Guidelines for identification and handling of some non-records are discussed in *Appendix A – Non-Records*.

<u>Trigger Dates</u>

Trigger dates are included in retention periods whenever possible. A *trigger date* is the date of an event, action or cut-off point that begins the countdown to the end of the retention period. Examples of a trigger date in a retention period are highlighted in the following: "3 years + current **after expiration of the warranty**" and 1 year + current **after the tap is disconnected**." When a trigger date is not specified in the retention period, the countdown to the end of the specified retention period begins on the date the file is closed, the date the file no longer has any administrative or reference value, or the date of the newest document in the file.